Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) as a School-Based Social Emotional Learning Program

Alec L. Miller, PsyD Co-Founder & Clinical Director Cognitive & Behavioral Consultants of Westchester and Manhattan www.cbc-psychology.com

Clinical Professor of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences Montefiore Medical Center/Albert Einstein College of Medicine Bronx, NY

> Connecticut Association of Schools Oct 1, 2020

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Outline

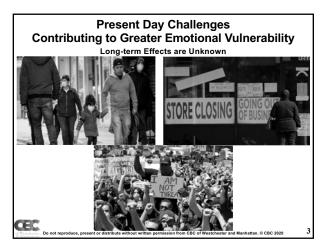
- The Mental Health Challenges of our Youth in the 21st Century
- Need for Social-Emotional Learning
 - Building resilience
 - Even more now in a pandemic
- Dialectical Behavior Therapy in Schools

• Tiers 1-3

- Universal, Targeted, Intensive
- Teaching DBT "Life Skills" to students
- These skills are useful for us too (staff, parents)

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Hope for the Future
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Schools have most contact with kids

- Outpatient clinicians can be expensive and inaccessible the median number of visits to outpatient clinics is 1
- What have you seen in your schools? — Emotional disturbance classifications
 - School counseling demands
 - Increase in special education referrals
 - School refusal behaviors among youth
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Impact on School Staff

Burnout in Education (Pre-COVID)

- 25% of teachers feel burned out at any given time
- 3x more likely to to quit than similarly trained professionals
 Teacher distress costs at least \$3.5 billion annually due to absenteeism,
- turnover, poor performance and waste
 Burnout is significantly higher in helping professions because of limited
- resources, marginal working conditions, intense demands which can lead to chronic stress

Since COVID

- Increased shortages
- Up to 45% of principals report leaving job earlier than planne
 Demands of "always being on"

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Pre-COVID Context for Kids: In Any Given Year in the US...

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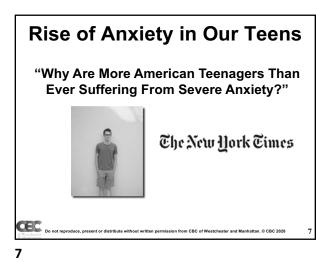
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- At least <u>1 in 5</u> children and adolescents suffer from:
 - An anxiety disorder
 - -Depression
 - -Non-suicidal self-injury
 - -Suicidal ideation



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Anxiety Rates Increasing

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- Busier, digitally distracted, lives
- Rising pressures
- The iGen: Smartphones and social media
- Lower social support
- Too much "scaffolding"?
- · Perceived and real dangers



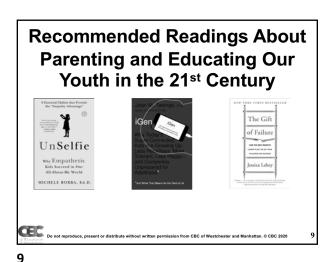
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School shootings
Terrorism

Unemployment

Do not record

- COVID-19, health, illness, death
 Going to school? Playground, friend's house?
- 8





UnSelfie: Empathic Children Can Recognize Feelings

- Empathy is a quality that <u>can be</u> <u>taught</u>
- Emotionally attuned kids are <u>physically healthier</u> and <u>score higher</u> <u>academically</u> than kids who aren't coached to consider the feelings and needs of others

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Borba, 2016

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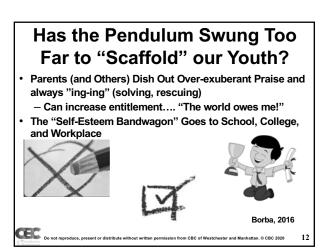
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The "Selfie Syndrome" The condition is all about self-promotion

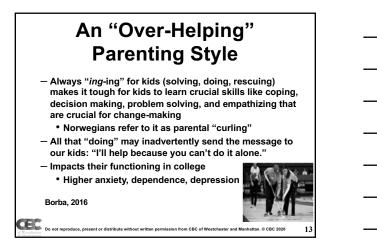
- The condition is all about self-promotion, personal branding, and self-interest <u>at the exclusion of other's</u> <u>feelings, needs, and concerns.</u>
- Four reasons why we should be concerned - We see a measurable dip in empathy among today's youth and a significant increase in narcissism
- We observe a clear increase in peer cruelty
- We observe more cheating and weaker moral reasoning in young people today
- Our plugged-in, high-pressure culture is leading to a mental health epidemic among young people.
 Borba, 2016

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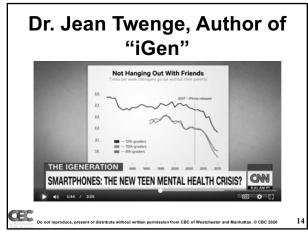




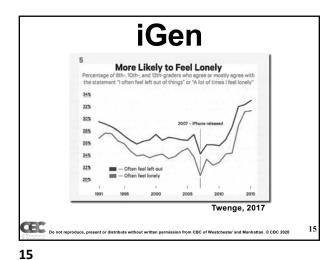






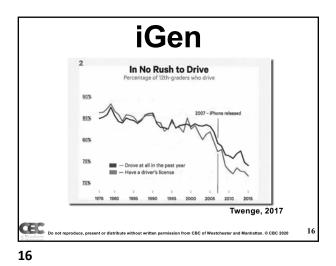






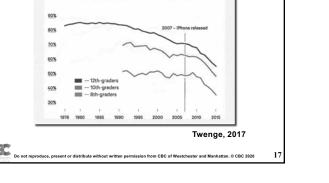


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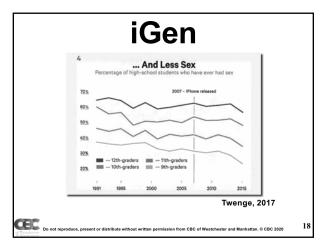




iGen 3 Less Dating ... 90% 80% 70% 60% 50% 403 Twenge, 2017 CEC Do not and Manhattan. © CBC 2020 om CBC of W



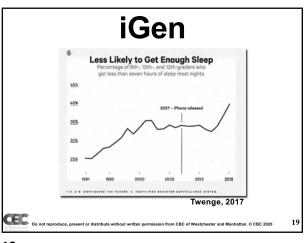




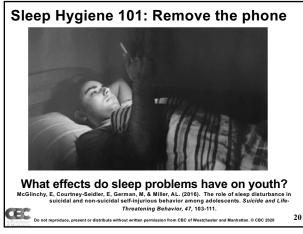




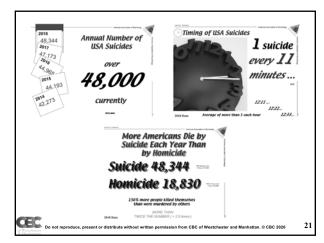








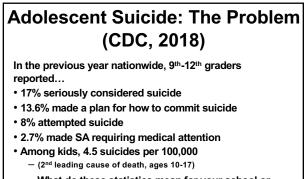










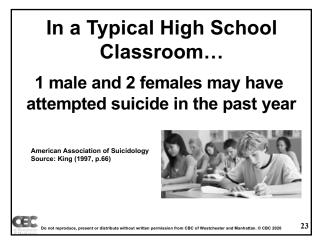


What do these statistics mean for your school or agency?

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Non-Suicidal Self-Injurious Behaviors

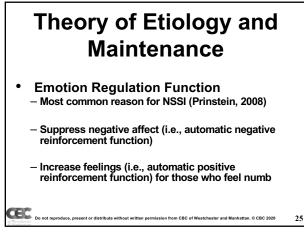
- Coping strategy of the 21st Century?
- NSSI = "the deliberate, direct destruction or alteration of body tissue, without conscious suicidal intent but resulting in injury severe enough for tissue damage to occur." (Gratz, 2003, p. 192)

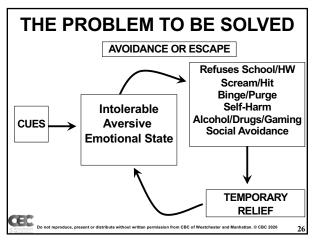
What are the most common methods?

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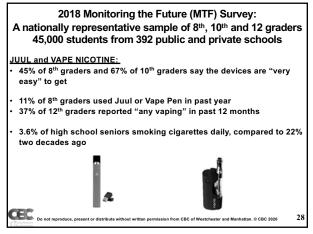






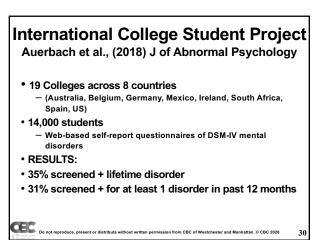






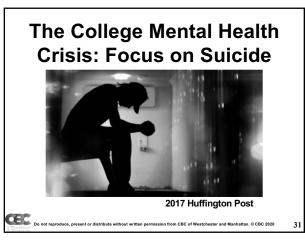


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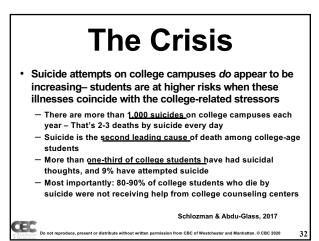








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What are we doing wrong that so many of our youth are struggling into young adulthood?

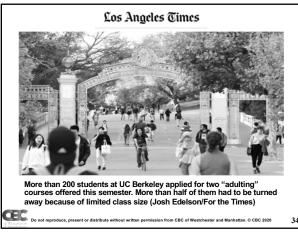
Is it our responsibility to teach them life skills?

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What is the Solution? Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) A skills-based curriculum that helps students with social/emotional problem solving Initially developed as an intervention in a clinical setting but has evolved into a more general school-based program Used in schools to teach coping skills to improve emotional and behavioral regulation, subsequently helping educational functioning and developing critical life skills

Skills are meant to be applied throughout the school day and students may be 'coached' to use the skills

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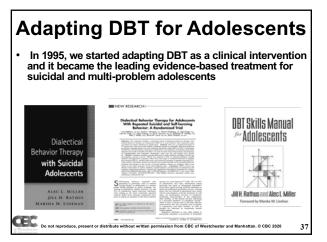
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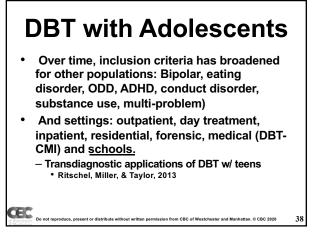
5 Problem Areas DBT Skills 1. Emotional Dysregulation 1. Emotion Regulation 2. Inpulsivity (include avoidance) 2. Distress Tolerance 3. Interpersonal Problems 3. Interpersonal Effectiveness 4. Teenager and Family Challenges (i.e., non-dialectical tinking, invalidation, poor contingency mgmt) 4. Walking the Middle Path 5. Reduced Awareness & Focus 5. Core Mindfulness



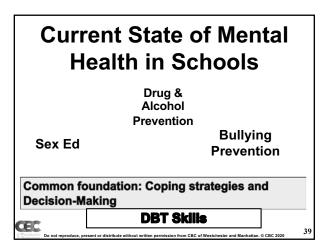
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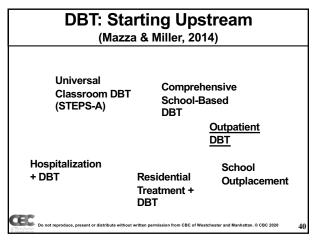


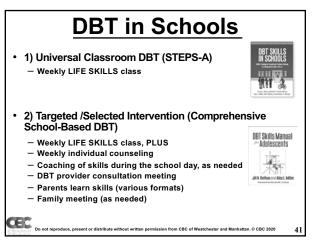


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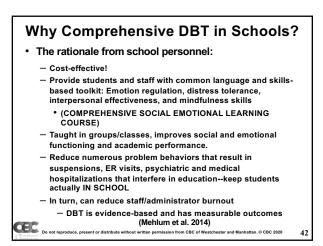




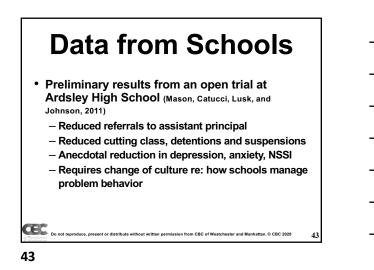




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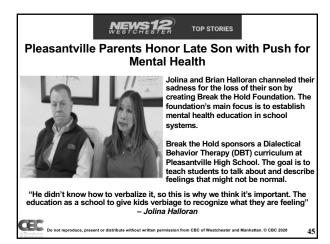




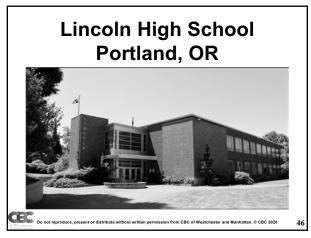


 Data from Schools
 Preliminary results from an open trial at Pleasantville HS (Dadd, 2015, unpublished dissertation)
 Comprehensive school-DBT program
 Reductions in depression and social stress as measured by BASC, 2nd edition
 Increases in adaptive coping skills, in particular mindfulness skills
 Increases in ability to tolerate distressing situations and reduction in maladaptive coping
 Requires change of culture re: how schools manage problem behavior

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Lincoln HS Statistics

- 1720 students
- Middle to high socio-economic status

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- 100 Best High Schools in United States
- High stress and anxiety (OHTS 2008: 13% of students considered suicide in last twelve months; 2012: 8.4%)
- About 20 parent meetings/year for cutting, suicidal ideation or attempt (record year high was 45)
- Suicide was leading cause of death until SB-DBT
 Jim Hanson, 2015

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CEC .

Lincoln HS Statistics

Hanson, 2015

- Identified at-risk youth (ie, NSSI ,SI, attempts) and provided Comprehensive DBT to 56 HS students.
- Results:
 - Before DBT: one to two suicides per year, since starting DBT in school 9 years ago there have been no suicides
 - Before DBT: two placements into Portland Public School's day treatment classroom per year, since DBT one placement in nine years
- Statistically significant improvements in GPA from preto post-intervention

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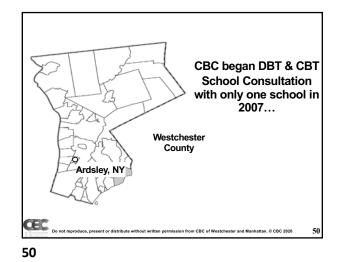
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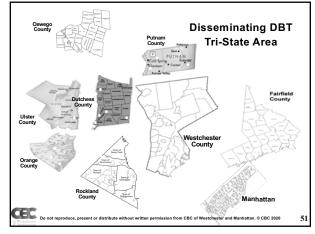


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BASC Subscale	Mean Pre (SD)	Mean Post (SD)	95% CI	t-score	Cohen's d
Anxiety	59.57 (12.17)	53.90 (13.62)	2.13-9.21	3.22*	.91
Depression	62.27 (14.65)	51.45 (10.29)	6.75-14.90	5.34**	1.51
Internalizing	60.51 (11.95)	52.65 (11.86)	4.14-11.59	4.24**	1.20
Anger Control	57.70 (10.74)	51.63 (10.22)	2.50-9.63	3.42*	1.02
* < <u>.005</u> ** < .00)1; Bonferroni cor	rection = .0125			



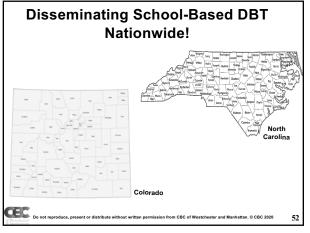




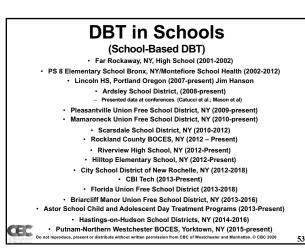


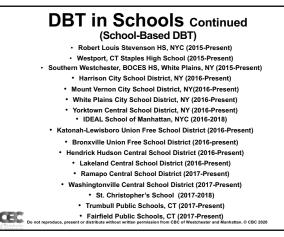


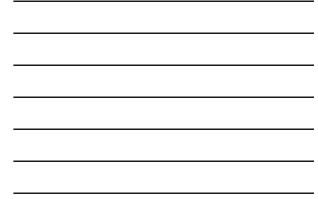
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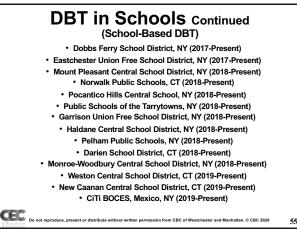


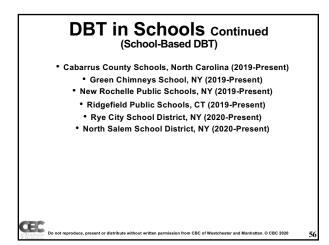


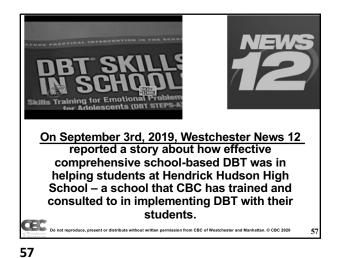










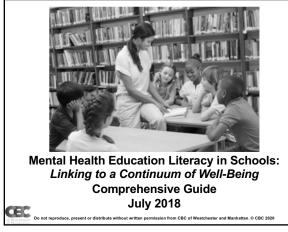


Mental Health Education is now required to be part of New York's School Curriculum in 2018

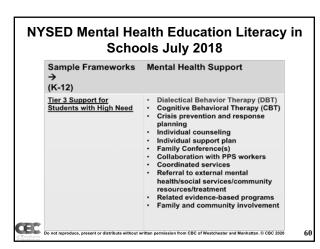




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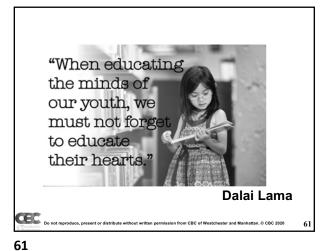


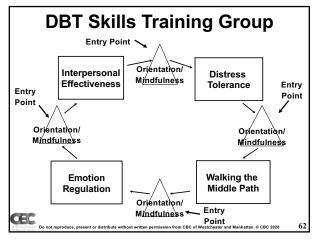




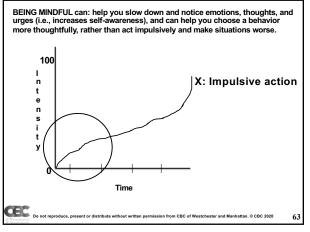


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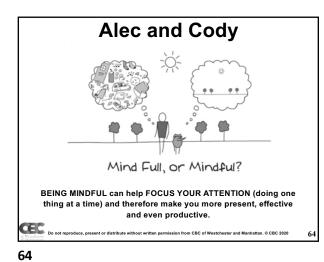














Other Benefits of Mindfulness Being mindful can: Reduce your emotional suffering and increase your pleasure and sense of wellbeing. Increase compassion for self and others Lessen your pain, tension, and stress, and in turn can even improve your health (DBT Skills Manual for Adolescents, Rathus & Miller p 270)

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Mindfulness Revolution in Schools

Science shows that practicing mindfulness even minutes a day for a few weeks—can reap such positive benefits as boosting the immune systems, reducing stress, increasing resilience, enhancing focus, stretching attention, and improving memory.

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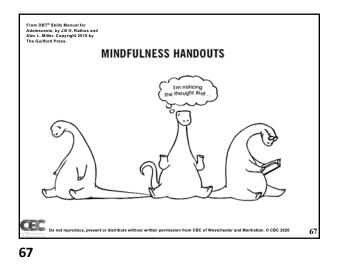
Borba, 2016

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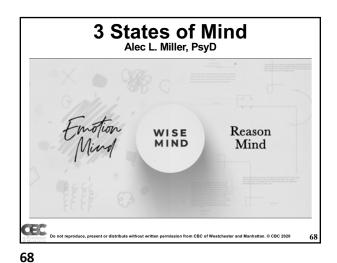
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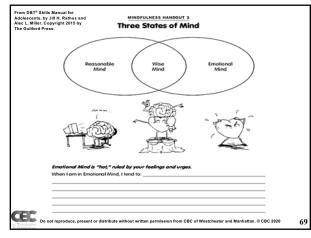
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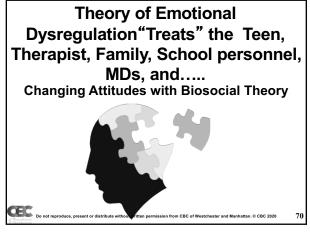




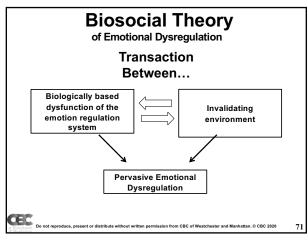




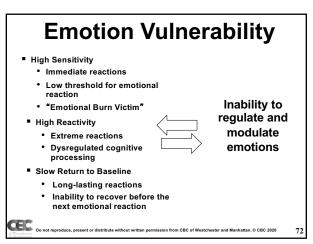


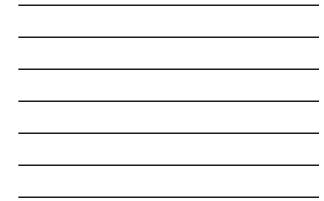


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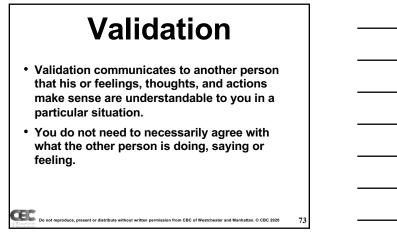


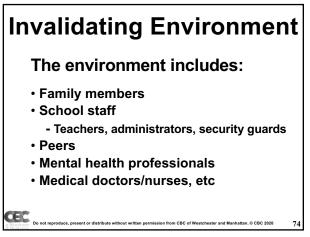
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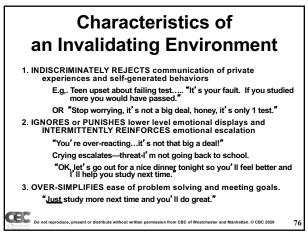


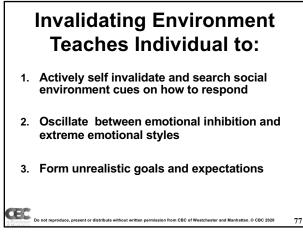
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Invalidating Environment

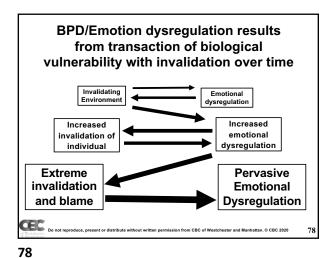
Pervasively negates, punishes, corrects, ignores or dismisses behavior independent of the actual validity of the behavior

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Teaching Biosocial Theory to Students, Parents, School Personnel, Medical Doctors, Therapists

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Try to Validate Your Kids! Validation communicates to another person that his or feelings, thoughts,

- and actions make sense and are understandable to you in a particular situation
- Validation ≠Agreement
- Very effective way to help regulate another person's emotions

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Try to Validate Your Kids!

"Jessica, I know how upsetting it is for you not to be able to have friends sleep over because of COVID."

"I get being on zoom all day for class makes it really hard to stay focused or to be as engaged in learning....AND what can you do to help stay focused given the circumstances?"

"Danny, it makes sense that you don't feel like getting to bed "early" given that your first class isn't until 10am....AND, I think it's important that you wake up, have breakfast, by 930am so you're not staying up all night and sleeping the day away."

(Normalizing feeling without approving or normalizing of any problematic behaviors that may be happening)

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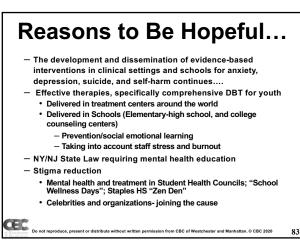


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"When I first heard the term 'mental health,' the first thing that came to mind was mental toughness.

Masking pain. Hiding it. Keeping it inside.

That had been embedded in me since I was a kid. Never show weakness. Suck it up. Play through it. Live through it.

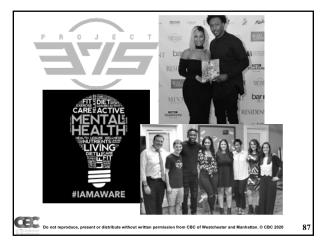
Now, I realize that mental health means the

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total opposite." Brandon Marshall NFL Wide Receiver



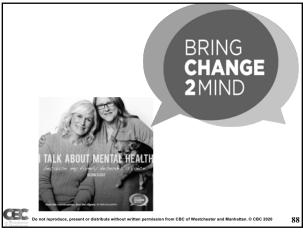
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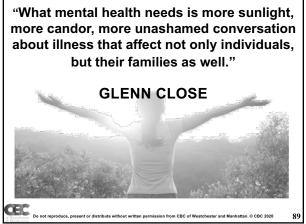


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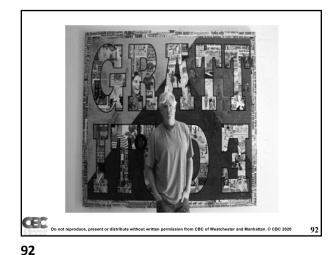
STIGMA? We need to help college students see mental health care as less stigmatizing so they will access help. The University of Michigan is just one school taking this on...















Consultation and Training

- · Ongoing trainings offered by CBC Team
- · Individual and group consultation for mental health providers on specific disorders/manualized approaches
- On-site trainings for hospitals, schools, corporations, and other agencies for prevention, treatment, and crisis response utilizing CBT and **DBT** approaches

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Alycia Dadd, PhD **Director of Consultation Services** (914) 385-1150 x4716 adadd@cbc-psychology.com

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Includes weekly individual and peer supervision, DBT and CBT consultation teams and ongoing didactic training

Extensive supervision, didactics, and training in individual and

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- group CBT/DBT, PCIT, Traumafocused treatments, outcomesmonitoring
- Possible junior psychologist position post fellowship

Chad Brice, PhD **Director of Training** 914-385-1150 x4735 cbrice@cbc-psychology.com ce, present or distribute without written permission from CBC of Westchester and Manhattan. © CBC 2020

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Adolescent DBT Books/Manuals

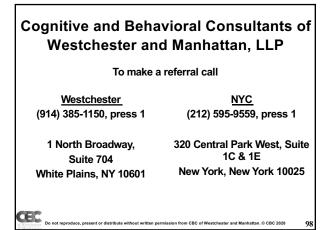
- Miller, Rathus, & Linehan (2007). DBT with Suicidal Adolescents. Guilford Press.
- Rathus & Miller (2015). DBT Skills Manual for Adolescents. Guilford Press.
- Mazza, JJ, Dexter-Mazza, ET, Miller, AL, Rathus, JH & Murphy, HE. (2016). DBT Skills in Schools: DBT for Emotional Problem Solving for Adolescents (DBT STEPS-A). Guilford Press.

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For more treatment and training information: CBC www.cbc-psychology.com

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DBT Assumptions about Students, Families and Therapists

- People are doing the best they can
- People want to improve
- People need to be more effective, try harder, and/or be more motivated to change
- People must learn new behaviors in all relevant contexts
- People may not have caused all of their own problems, but they have to solve them anyway
- The lives of emotionally distressed adolescents are painful as they are currently being lived

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People cannot fail in DBT

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